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WHAT ABOUT HOUSING IN ILLINOIS?

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DWIGHT H. GREEN
GOVERNOR
STATE OF ILLINOIS

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A MESSAGE

. . . FROM THE GOVERNOR

"I look forward with confidence to a period when better housing shall prevail throughout our great state, whether in farm, village, town or city. It is fitting that private enterprise and public housing should work together toward this goal.

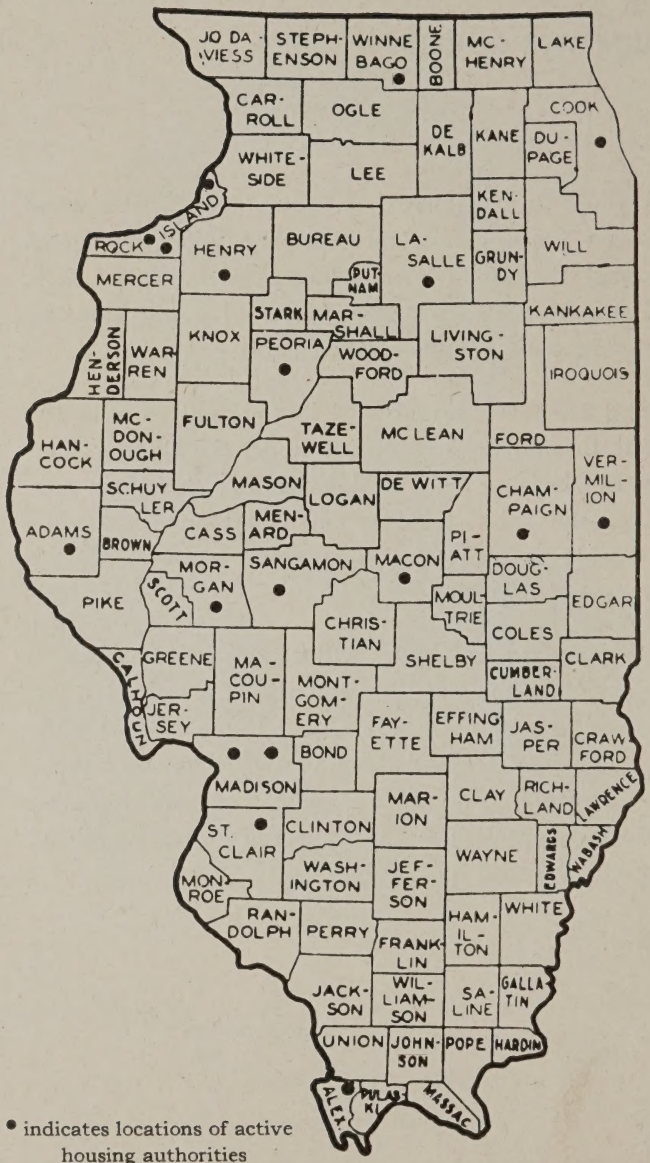
The State Housing Board in conjunction with the Sub-Committee on Housing under the Illinois Post-War Planning Commission, have as their firm purpose the solution of problems attendant to good housing as well as a greater and better home life and environment.

I trust that this booklet will help serve to arouse all citizens to the need of, and the responsibility for, better homes in Illinois, and it is my earnest hope and purpose that all those now at home and those who return from service with the armed forces, shall have every home opportunity for healthful, productive and happy lives."

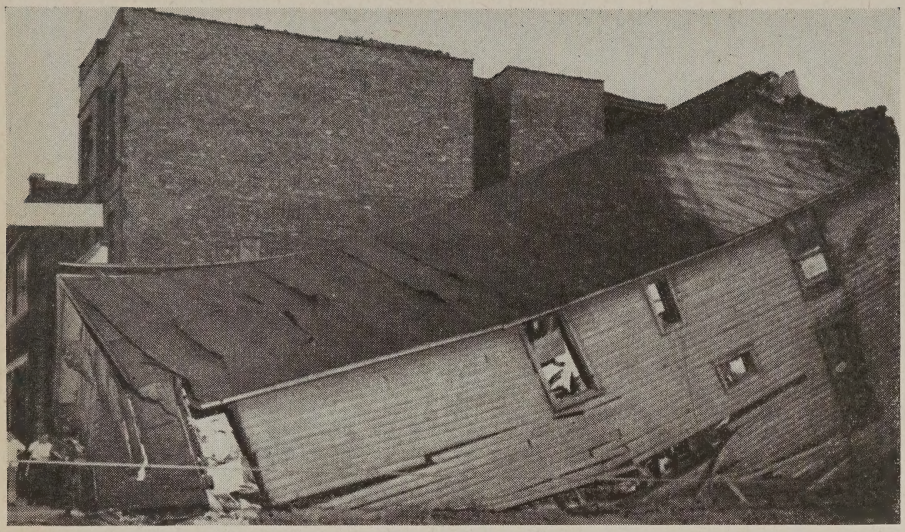
Dwight H. Green

7 May 45 dir. g. 4 copies 10 May 45 KMW

BETTER HOUSING FOR THE STATE OF ILLINOIS



• indicates locations of active housing authorities



BOMBED? NO, JUST FELL DOWN

July 31, 1944. "Three women and a man were buried under the debris when a three-story house at 874 N. Franklin Street, Chicago, Illinois, collapsed during the night. Timber decay was blamed. The injured residents were removed to the hospital for treatment and the area roped off."

Everyday, tragedy un-noticed by most of us finds its victims in the slums, destroying the morals, health and lives of men, women and children.

Why are slums allowed to remain? The property in the above picture produced a net profit of 17 per cent of the owner's investment. This fact is reason enough why slum housing persists. It is time that fearless public-spirited citizens from all walks of life cooperate to eliminate dangerous and unfit housing.

DEATH STRIKES HERE

The lives of these children are in danger. Contagious disease resulting from overcrowding and lack of fresh air and sunshine, takes a high toll in such homes.

A survey of various slum areas in several sections of Illinois showed that from 100 to 150 babies out of each 1000 born, die. In decent, healthful neighborhoods the infant death rate was less than 30 for each 1000 babies born. Three to five times as many children meet death in the slums, the victims of their surroundings.

OUR NATION IS OUR HOME

By any decent standard, millions of American families are living in homes which are shamefully inadequate. What do we want to do about the slum areas of our villages and cities, and the ramshackle buildings on our farms?

It has been said, and truly so, that a Nation is no stronger than the fabric of its homes and the well-being of its people. Slums are an attack upon our Nation from within, infecting our communities, destroying health, wealth and wasting lives. The housing problem which faces America to-day is a large and difficult one, but we must face it just as we are fighting against our enemies overseas.

With this thought in mind, we must look forward to an ever-expanding rehousing program. We must accept the fact that slum areas in America can and MUST GO. Decent housing for our people can only be attained when the people themselves make up their minds to do this rehousing job and continue to work together until the job is completed.

We are proud of our country and the principles for which she stands. These principles were earned, and are now being fought for, by the sweat, blood and tears of our people. Our Nation has gone forward magnificently on foreign battlefields. Shall not our Home Front make equal progress?

YOUNG AMERICA

When our Veteran returns he will want a job and a HOME. Will he be content to live, or have his family live in slums or shacks? Will he not want a home of his own with modern conveniences for his wife and children? The returning serviceman will be content only when Young America gets even a better break than he had, and the place for this to begin, is adequate housing.

OUR COMMUNITY IS OUR HOME FRONT

Our houses, our villages, towns and cities have been slowly growing older. As the fine old neighborhoods became run-down, newer outlying residential sections were developed. The same process repeated itself many times, without planning the new neighborhoods, and without plans to improve the older, congested and run-down districts. The poor districts were forgotten or seldom mentioned when we talked with pride of our home town. But the decay was spreading and now we find it right in our midst, suddenly realizing that these neighborhoods have become a costly burden upon all citizens.

So to-day we find sections of nearly every town and city the victim of decay and blight. These sections are the heart of the housing problem. Those who could afford it moved out into modern homes in newer neighborhoods. Only those whose low income did not permit their moving remained in the blighted areas. Yet, all of us are vitally concerned, whether we live in such sections, near them, or far removed. Obviously we all agree that they should be removed but it is not that simple. New housing must be provided within the means of those families who cannot afford to move out and pay higher rents.

But more than new housing is required. We need to plan the improvements of towns and cities—planning new neighborhoods with parks and open play areas, with community centers for recreation, and shopping centers must be planned or business will lose too.

OUR PLAN FOR

Most of us, in going about our daily business, never come face to face with the appalling facts about the homes in which so many of the citizens of our proud State are forced to live.

The old saying "Out of sight, out of mind" is never so true to most of us, as when applied to slum homes. But such homes do exist in cities, villages and farms, and they breed disease, blight lives and take their toll of our communities, not only in physical, spiritual and moral losses, but in equally great economic losses, charges and liabilities.

Our State can no longer condone or afford to tolerate slums and blighted neighborhoods. We must begin to plan more vigorously to attack such conditions and provide for the welfare of all of our people wherever they live—on the farms, or in the villages and cities. This is our job, yours and mine. The State Housing Board is ready to help you and your community but YOU, too, must be willing to do something about it.

ILLINOIS HOMES

The State Housing Board was created by our State Legislature to:

First, Serve and advise any and all communities interested in and desiring better homes.

Second, Serve and advise private enterprise in the elimination of unsafe housing and in providing modern, healthful homes at rentals within the means of moderate family incomes.

Third, Assist communities, through local planning and housing agencies, in providing low-rental homes for these low-income families whose needs cannot be met by private enterprise.

In this program, the State Housing Board sees no conflict in the principles and purpose it is designed to serve—no conflict between Public Service, represented by Government, and Free Enterprise, represented by private citizens. If health and welfare deserve public assistance, certainly public assistance, by providing decent homes where necessary, is equally if not more essential. Our homes are the keystone of our American way of life and of good citizenry.

IN THE CITIES

This is how some of our slums look. Inside, and in the back yards and alleys, they are even worse. Whole neighborhoods of buildings like these are beyond repair. New houses must be built and entire neighborhoods be re-planned.

These children have no place to play other than in slum gutters, streets and alleys. Should we expect young Americans to grow up in this kind of environment? Responsible Social Agencies throughout the State have long known that juvenile delinquency thrives in such neighborhoods.

THIS COULD BE THE RESULT

Decent, healthful homes like those shown in the scene above can replace slums and blighted sections of your community. Many cities in Illinois have already begun to do so and today are reaping the untold benefits to both resident and community which result from such homes and communities.

When the community accepts the responsibility of providing healthful homes and neighborhoods where children can play in safety, it will have made one of the finest investments possible in our Citizens of Tomorrow.

FATEFUL FACTS ABO

In the State of Illinois there

336,141 Need Major Repairs | 120,011 Dangerously Overcrowded | 227,947 Without Electric Lighting | 773,784 Wit Private B

In the Cities of the State of Illinois the

179,666 Need Major Repairs | 84,265 Dangerously Overcrowded | 25,340 Without Electric Lighting | 341,069 Wi Private B

In the Towns and Villages of Illinois the

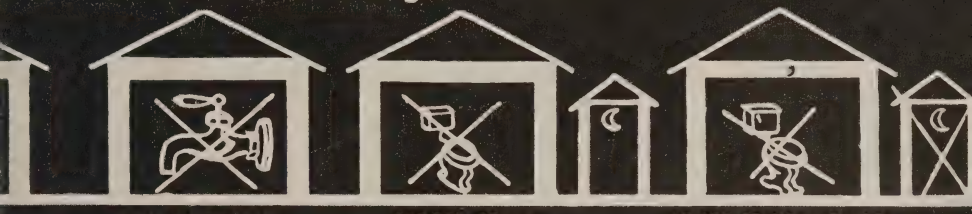
80,723 Need Major Repairs | 21,696 Dangerously Overcrowded | 45,299 Without Electric Lighting | 214,368 Wi Private B

On the Farms of the State of Illinois t

75,752 Need Major Repairs | 14,050 Dangerously Overcrowded | 157,308 Without Electric Lighting | 218,347 Wit Private B

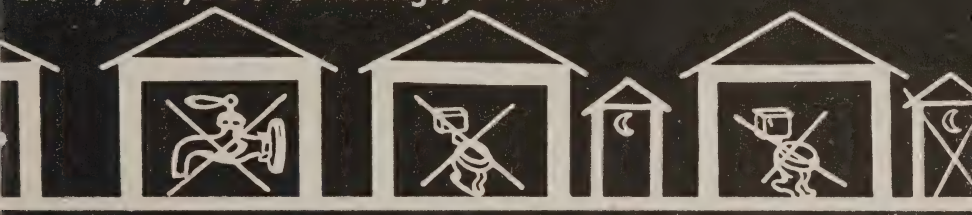
UT ILLINOIS HOMES

are 2,280,826 Dwellings



ut 460,277 Without Running Water | 520,737 Have Outside Toilets | 17,676 Neither Inside Nor Outside Toilets

are 1,687,563 Dwellings, of them:



out 73,899 Without Running Water | 106,425 Have Outside Toilets | 5,432 Neither Inside Nor Outside Toilets

e are 333,505 Dwellings, of them:

out 177,190 Without Running Water | 198,936 Have Outside Toilets | 5,650 Neither Inside Nor Outside Toilets

ere are 259,758 Dwellings, of them:

ut 209,198 Without Running Water | 215,376 Have Outside Toilets | 6,594 Neither Inside Nor Outside Toilets

Shall The People Of Illinois

NO! says the taxpayer, because it costs too much to have to pay for the care of crippled, impaired, diseased bodies and minds in our asylums, hospitals, homes, jails and penal institutions. It is better to provide healthy homes which contribute to the development of healthy minds, strong bodies, and able citizens who can work, save and raise families throughout a long, happy productive life.

+ + +

NO! says the home-builder, contractor, architect, landowner, business-man and all private enterprise, because you personally, your district, your community, your State and your Nation, can thrive, progress, profit and go forward only as greatly as the sum of all of us can. Therefore better homes, healthier families, happier lives, means better busi-

NOW IS THE

Live Under Slum Conditions?

ness, better work, better farms, better crops, better towns and cities, and a better State and Nation.

+ + +

NO! say the unfortunate families who live under slum conditions. They do not live that way because they want to—but only because they lack the means to provide better homes for themselves without assistance. Given that help they will take their place in the community as respected citizens.

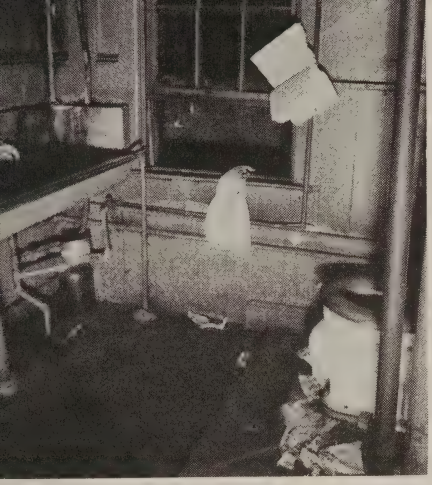
+ + +

NO! says the State of Illinois and its State Housing Board which has been established to cooperate in the attainment of better housing for all of its people. Aid must be given when housing problems are beyond the ability of the individual to solve.

TIME TO PLAN!

IN ILLINOIS TOWNS AND VILLAGES

There are many rural sections of Illinois where housing conditions are uniformly bad. Thousands of tenant and subsistence farmers live in two or three room frame shacks of the worst description. Some are fifty and seventy-five years old. *It will be definitely good business to replace them.*



The above scenes need no words. Such conditions are a menace both to the individual and to the community.

+ + +

Three meals a day are prepared and eaten in kitchens like this. No family, no housewife should be required to put up with such conditions, which are a hardship, a heartache and a threat to the health of the family.

What You Can Do About

WHY?

It is up to you and your fellow citizens to provide the initiative, enterprise and the will to get the job done. Slum homes must go from Illinois.

To the businessman, a State Housing Program means more business, more jobs, better and happier employees. Property values go up when slum spots are removed. When they are gone and citizens live in decent homes, millions of dollars will have been retrieved from property, which would otherwise be badly depreciated. The taxpayer will also save money. Every dollar spent for better housing means the saving of dollars which would otherwise have to be spent paying for the host of costly problems and losses which breed, flourish, and spread out from such homes, whether because of crime, incurable disease, insanity or poor relief and other taxpayer-supported institutional assistance.

Wherever there is a shortage of adequate housing, it means that more of a family's income goes for rent, and therefore less money can be spent for food, clothing and other necessities.

Increased good housing improves all such conditions. The construction of new homes mean employment in a wide variety of industries. Workers in your community will have more money in their pockets, be better employees, give you more customers, and the whole community thus will prosper. *Yes, better housing is good, sound business any way you look at it.*

TODAY'S PLANNING YIELDS

HOW?

The most effective means which citizens possess that will enable them to achieve their purpose is *concerted action.*

1st. Organize a Citizens Housing Committee including public officials, representatives of business, labor, civic and welfare groups.

2nd. Secure information about the extent of bad housing in your community. Write to the State Housing Board for information.

3rd. Conduct studies to determine the sections of your community which should be improved.

4th. Study the cost of blighted neighborhoods to see how much your community can save, and thus afford, in providing better homes and neighborhoods.

5th. Plan the most beneficial use and selection of land to make a well-planned community that will provide for the proper relationship of functions, buildings and living space.

6th. Consider the need of adequate parks and recreation areas, of parking and shopping facilities.

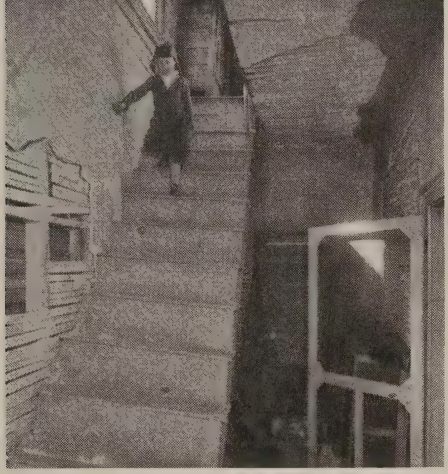
7th. Remember that a well-planned community should include a community center for the activities of all aged groups.

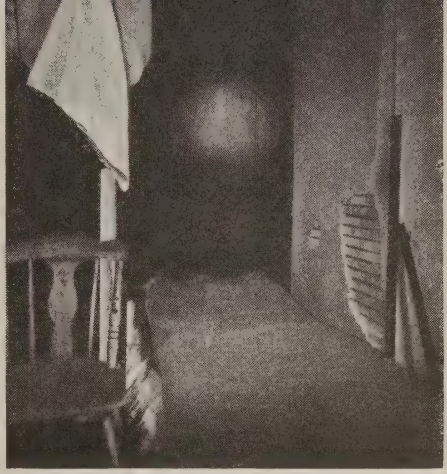
8th. The safeguard of community planning is the provision of a follow-through program to protect the new homes and neighborhoods.

9th. Consult the State Housing Board for assistance.

ON THE FARMS

In Illinois, many farm homes are dangerously below minimum decent standards. Over one-fourth of farm dwellings need major repairs and 4 out of 5 are without sanitary conveniences.





HOMES BEYOND REPAIR

These scenes speak for themselves. Working against hopeless odds, the housewife's day is one of drudgery. Health and safety are menaced at every turn.

BALA

"The prime necessity—in all

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

As our Nation has expanded so have the opportunities for free enterprise. To-day private enterprise faces a challenge of providing homes for income groups which it has been unable to serve heretofore. Its share of the housing job should be the largest by far. Proper forms of public assistance are required which will provide a new frontier within our communities for the clearance and rehabilitation of slum areas by private enterprise. A large market for better homes exists among the medium-income families of our communities.

We shall have to look to private enterprise to supply this demand. Public housing should only supplement private housing, and to the extent which private enterprise meets this challenge, public housing will recede from the picture. Together, public and private enterprise face a job so vast that a program of cooperation must supplant false fears of competition. They should work as a team, together, to provide better homes for all the people of our State.

N C E !

things—in a Free Nation"

PUBLIC HOUSING

Why Public Housing? Slums and blighted areas are not only a menace to the health and welfare of their occupants, but to the whole community. These areas are an economic drain on everyone, producing negligible tax returns and requiring excessively costly services for health, juvenile delinquency, police and fire protection.

No citizen that could build, buy or rent a decent home would live in a slum dwelling. Such a person needs public assistance. In an instance like this, there is no competition with private enterprise. The elimination of slums and the rehabilitation of neighborhoods is good business as well as being in the public interest. However, slums cannot be cleared unless new homes are provided.

To-day local housing authorities in Illinois may be established, under State Laws, to solve the problem of housing for low-income families. To carry out this program your community will have to take the initiative and begin to plan NOW.

COUNSEL, ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE . . .

To Your Community is the Function of the State Housing Board of the State of Illinois

Under the program of the Illinois Post-War Planning Commission, a sub-committee has been created to cooperate with the Illinois State Housing Board.

This sub-committee is composed of community leaders representing State-wide organizations, and is an advisory body presently engaged in making specific studies and recommendations for the improvement of housing in Illinois.

Take the first step. The time to plan is NOW. Prepare for the rehousing march which will sweep America . . . a country where children can grow up in good healthful surroundings.

We are ready to help your Community.

STATE HOUSING BOARD
105 South LaSalle Street
Chicago 3, Illinois

+ + +

BETTER HOUSING . . . BETTER LIVES!

STATE HOUSING BOARD

105 SOUTH LA SALLE STREET

CHICAGO 3, ILLINOIS

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Louis Wirth

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Shall the
People of Illinois
Live Under Slum Conditions

+ + +

In Illinois—of

2,280,826 Dwellings

773,784 Have No Private Bath

520,737 Have Outside Toilets

460,277 Have No Running Water

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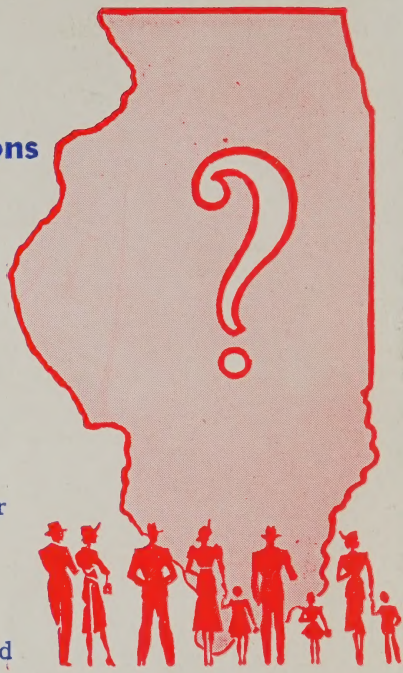

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CHICAGO 3, ILLINOIS

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